

ONYX

I N F O R M E R

The Black Student View at NU

February, 1988

Mandela: The voice lives on

By Rachel Lynn Evans

Can a voice live on even after the speaker has gone? Now, mind you, Memorex and other audio equipment cannot play a role here. They only preserve the voice they do not live the voice. What is the voice and who lives the voice? I am speaking of a voice so strong that it ignites the soul, this voice is so intense that few can remain idle in its presence. It motivates, it stimulates, it captivates. Northeastern University's School of Law Class of 1988 (NUSL) is motivated, stimulated and captivated by such a voice, the voice of jailed political activist Nelson Mandela.

Mandela's voice speaks of ending Apartheid in racist South Africa and for this voice the South African government claimed him as a political prisoner. Perhaps they believed they could silence Mandela's voice, but a voice can live on even after the speaker has gone. For three years it seemed as if Northeastern University's Board of Trustees did not find truth in this statement. For three consecu-

tive years it denied NUSL's request that Mandela be given an honorary law degree. The Board denied the request of NUSL for various reasons, ranging from, a request for an honorary degree must have a faculty sponsor to the current denial which concerns an unwritten policy which claims a recipient must be present at the graduation ceremony. Mandela, being a political prisoner, cannot fulfill this request.

NUSL continued to peacefully battle the Board's decision. NUSL designed a rally to take place on January 14th the same date as Northeastern University's Martin Luther King Convocation. In the hope that the spirit and voice of the rally would somehow motivate the Board to grant Mandela with an honorary degree. It seems appropriate to say that ideas hoped for can become a reality no matter what the adversities when voices are striving to a common goal of good. NUSL class of 1988 adamantly believed this and because of their belief on Wednesday.



Nelson Mandela

January the 13th the Board of Trustees consented to bestow Nelson Mandela with an honorary law degree. At Northeastern Uni-

versity the voice of Nelson Mandela will continue to live on. Pass it on.

Young and Bold

The Onyx spoke with Shirell Young, President of the Northeastern Black Student Association, about her expectations of the organization she leads, her long term of presidency and her future plans.

By Melanie A. Liptrout

ONYX - How do you handle being an R.A., a sorority member, president of the NBSA and a student?

SY - I go crazy; ha, ha, no. Basically I try to budget my time, which I'm not very good at, but I try and do my priorities first and put all of my energy into that; except for being an R.A. which is ongoing.

ONYX - How long have you been president of NBSA?

SY - I've been president of NBSA for three years, since September, 1985.

ONYX - What has NBSA done since you've been president?

SY - When I first became president of NBSA it was just on its way to getting lived up. During my first semester, the fall of 1984,

there were only three people in NBSA and we were mainly trying to get the attendance up. so, when I ran (for president) in June of 1985 it was really a commitment to get some efficiency back into the organization because it had lost a lot of its effectiveness. When we were elected it was mainly sophomores, so we had a lot of energy. Our main concern was trying to get everything organized and to get more awareness on campus.

ONYX - What are your goals for the NBSA?

SY - For the members to be more responsible so I don't have to run around behind them and do their jobs and for NBSA to have more of a positive presence on campus. I think it has done well. The image has improved a lot within the last couple of years because now you see more NBSA people out there with the sweatshirts, the T-shirts and so forth. But my goals are mainly to get the students to be more responsible. I don't know how we can do it, but any suggestions are

welcome.

ONYX - What are the goals of the NBSA?

SY - I hope they're my goals. I hope they're the goals for the organization while I'm president and hopefully the president after me will continue my goals because I don't think my goals are a personality thing. It's not like it has to change when a new president comes in. I think that a new president can have these goals and still have his/her own influence on the organization.

ONYX - How do you deal with your members when they question your authority?

SY - It depends on how they question it. Some students have a serious problem with answering to other students. They sometimes feel that you don't have the right, but I don't care. I try and be as responsible as possible. If they're rude, I'm not going to be rude back but I'm going to be stern. But no one has questioned my authority. I have never really encountered any bad situations in the last three years. I try to let people know that

if you have a problem with something that I've said then let me know because I'm not afraid to justify myself. I feel that everything I do has a purpose and if you have a better way of doing it let me know. I don't get offended by suggestions. If you feel that I didn't handle something correctly then ask me, I can explain what my reasons were. If you can't accept that, then we can work together and try to change it.

ONYX - What do think it takes to be a good president?

SY - First, I think you really shouldn't worry about what individual people in the organization want. Your first and primary concern should be for the organization. Secondly, I think that you should be efficient and also be stern about what you say and do, but not so much that people are afraid of you. I also think that you have to be on top of everything that goes on within the organization and, last, but not least, I think a president has to be affectionate toward his/her mem-

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Editorial

In response to the article in the N.U. News, it is our opinion that it is difficult to label the disappearance of the Onyx as an "outward act of racism against the Black Students of Northeastern and their views," but it is also difficult for us to believe that the disappearance was simply a "mix-up." The Onyx staff consists of five dedicated students who put a lot of hard work and time into every issue that is published. We find it hard to believe that someone picked up the Onyx by mistake. We feel that when the person realized he had picked up the wrong papers he should have returned them. What would a white male want with 1,000 Black student newspapers? The Onyx may not have a great profile like it did in the past, but there was not one issue of the Onyx published last year, and so far, there have been three this year. Hopefully, the pride we now have for the Onyx will strengthen as we try and make future issues of the Onyx somewhat comparable to or better than the old one.

We've come this far by Faith

By Valencia Z.H. Hughes

THE PAST:

We've come this far by faith
Leaning on the Lord
Trusting in his holy word
He's never failed us yet

Oh yes, we have come a long way on nothing more than faith. Our ancestors entered this country with nothing more than faith; submitted, and toiled on the white plantations by nothing more than faith, and they fought back in uprisings, and silent attacks by nothing more than faith.

Our past holds a gold mine of men and women that stepped out on that intangible strength called faith. Nat Turner and his followers rose up, and struck out against their oppressors. Their strongest weapon was the faith they had in the freedom they sought. Harriet Tubman was driven by a great desire for freedom, a freedom that would be complete until all her people were free. Stepped out on faith many times in order to lead her people and herself to a complete and safe freedom. With words of wisdom and power Frederick Douglass spoke to the minds, the hearts and the souls of his people and gave them a desire for something better for themselves and their children. He gave them a desire for something better for themselves and their children. He gave them a tool by which they could achieve betterment in their lives, he gave them faith in themselves, and their abilities. Oh yes, and Ms. Sojourner Truth spoke out loud and clear. She informed this nation that is had taken something from the Negro people and that it had to give something back. She instilled in her people a faith that someday they would receive restitution.

These are not the only members of our ancestry that stepped out on faith, reaching for what was rightfully their's, and is rightfully your's, there were

others. Carter G. Woodson, known as the father of Black History; W.E.B. DuBois, who made his appeal to the White population to do what is consciously knew was right for the Negro people, in The Souls of Black Folks; Booker T. Washington, who asked his people to educate themselves, and to work hard to pull themselves up by economic stability; and Martin Luther King Jr., who was the Moses of the 1960s and lead his people across many Red Seas; and there are many others. They climbed slow steady steps to pull themselves and their people out of all kinds of oppressions. Their work is what snatched present day Black America out of the jaws of the oppressor. If it were not for our ancestors and their strong faith in what they fought for, we would still be fighting the same battles that they fought.

THE PRESENT:

Many battles have been fought
and won, but the war is not over yet
We are fighting still!

Today we have new leaders, and we are learning to call ourselves by a new name, African-Americans, but the struggle goes on. Those steps are still before us. Martin Luther King Jr. said he had been to the mountaintop, and looked over. He said he had seen the Promised Land. Well, we are still climbin' that mountain, and still looking for the Promised Land, but we can't stop now. This is no time to turn around. We must all do our best to keep the dream of our ancestors alive. We must do our best to make that dream come true. We must continue to climb toward the Promised Land.

Yet, in all our diligence, if we reach the Promised Land here in America and leave our brothers in Africa and other countries behind, we have not truly made it.

Hypocrisy in high places

By Garfield Wellington

The Reagan Administration found itself in a funny situation a couple of months ago. They had to defend a past marijuana user, who wanted to sit on the highest court in the land. The Reagan Administration with its "no nonsense" crusade against drugs found itself telling the American people that it was just a mistake.

The point is that even though Ginsburg realized he had made a mistake no one seemed ready to forgive. In fact, the Reagan camp left him out to dry. This is typical of the hypocrisy which runs rampant through this president's reign.

Has Ronald Reagan publicly apologized for fighting against the Civil Rights Act in the 1960s? Or why he fails to apply full economic sanctions against the apartheid government in South Africa? Or why he so adamantly opposed giving Martin Luther King Jr. a

holiday, before finally caving in to public pressure? These issues seem much more important than whether Mr. Ginsburg lit up a joint 20 years ago.

The Reagan Administration has to answer for its own mistakes and errors. Ginsburg was not an acceptable candidate for the Supreme Court because he had no record and no experience to qualify him to be on the Supreme Court. How can he be held accountable for a mistake made years ago when Ronald Reagan has not and is not being held accountable for his errors in judgment. Most people would agree that when the most powerful and democratic country in the world does not take a strong stand against a white racist African country, there is something definitely wrong. President Reagan should get off his sanctimonious high horse and take a look in the mirror. I do not think he would like what he sees.

Our struggle is not over until our people as a whole can hold up their heads and say "truly free." Our struggle is not over until all people everywhere can stand together as one.

It is the responsibility of us all to work towards this end, doing whatever we can, be it small or great, to free our people from oppression everywhere.

THE FUTURE:

The future stands as a shapeless clay
waiting to be formed by
whomever will dare
WILL IT BE YOU?

The future of Black History depends on what our children are taught in the present. So, in reality, our future depends on all of us alive here and now. We have

to stand up for the right and show children what is good in this world. Telling them that acceptance of good is right. Telling them that they must not accept what is wrong. That they must work to rid this world of the wrong that exists. And that they must start by doing right themselves.

We have to think about what we want the future for the children to be, and start working towards that now. Do we want peace to merely be in sight, or do we want to be standing in the midst of it, feeling wonderful? Our complete freedom is not far off. It's just far enough that we can not feel it. But the harder we work for it, the closer we will come to it. The longer we toll now, the less we will have to toll in the future.

The Onyx

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The Onyx-Informer is a student publication serving the black community at Northeastern University. It's office is located in 446 Eli Center, 360 Huntington Ave. Boston, Mass. 02115. Staff meetings are held on Thursday's at 6 p.m. Contributions are welcome and may be submitted to the editor at the above address. All interested students can join the Onyx and attend meetings. Typography and production for this issue of the Onyx were done by David Kiffer.

The Greek is gone

Sports Commentary

By Garfield Wellington

Jimmy "The Greek" Snyder, television sports analyst, was fired by CBS recently for racist comments he made which were aired by a Washington television station. These comments includes such statements as "blacks were bred to be better athletes than whites going back to the Civil War" and "if blacks become coaches there would be nothing for the whites to do." These outlandish comments came, ironically, in response to a question concerning the holiday of slain civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr.

The question has been asked whether Mr. Snyder should have been fired by CBS. Many people, including actor Bill Cosby, have come forward to say that "The Greek" should not have been fired. This writer, on the other hand, totally disagrees. CBS was correct in firing him and any other action or lack of action would have been totally inappropriate. Although Jimmy The Greek did apologize for his comments he should not be allowed to be seen on television after those racial slurs. The media, whether anyone wants to admit it or not, is a very powerful force in America. Along with this power comes a certain amount of social responsibility. Media personalities have to be held accountable for actions which are taken to betray this social responsibility. By "The Greek" arguing against the fact that all men are created equal, he failed to uphold his responsibilities and also betrayed the trust that the public had put in him as a public figure.

Jimmy "The Greek" has brought to light an interesting concept that seems to exist in the mind of some whites. This concept

says that since blacks comprise a large portion of the athletes in professional sports, that whites are the ones capable or the only

ones who should manage the various sports institutions. This type of philosophy has manifested itself in the embarrassing lack of blacks in management and coaching positions in professional sports. Professional sports must learn to clean out their own backyards of Jimmy "The Greek" type people who seem to control the upper echelon of the sports business. If "The Greek" were in a position to withhold jobs from blacks because of their color, he would, according to his comments, Jimmy "The Greek" was not in a position of practice racism, but was treated with the same kind of action he would have received if he did practice his racist philosophy.

CBS made the correct decision in taking "The Greek's" racially sick mind off the screen. When people become able to accept racial slurs so easily, it is a sad commentary on actually how far the black movement has gone in the past 20 years. Some whites still stereotype blacks as second-class citizens. Snyder's comments have shown many blacks that Martin Luther King's dream is a long way from being realized. Racism is still very prevalent in today's society and blacks can't get so comfortable as to tolerate such racial slurs against our dignity and character. We have to realize that we are a strong and vibrant people and should be treated as equals and with respect.



Project Ujima: Collective work and responsibility

By Valencia Z. H. Hughes

What is Project Ujima? That question is one that has been on my mind since my entrance to Northeastern. I finally decided to ask a few questions, to see what I could find out. On Jan. 11, I met with Steven Taylor, coordinator of Project Ujima and he told me everything I wanted to know. I think it will be interesting to you, the readers of Onxy.

Project Ujima was started in 1974, by the African-American Students on campus. The program was developed for students whose unlimited potential for success may not be reflected by traditional measurements, such as SAT scores or high school grades. The students are chosen from those who apply at Northeastern, and they are accepted on the condition that they participate in Project Ujima.

First, the students are required to attend a four-credit Reading and Study Skills class, that helps them to succeed in their other classes. They receive assistance in choosing their classes. The students must also meet regularly with their academic advisors at the African-American Institute, and attend workshops on Financial Aid, Co-op, etc., which are all to

their benefit.

Mr. Taylor told me some of his short and long term goals for improving Project Ujima. His short term goals are to enroll at least 75 students in the program each year and to retain 75 percent of the freshmen as sophomores. He also wants to have students receive full financial aid packets, accumulate credits before the sophomore year and to have the students return to the Institute to work with other students. His long term goals are to have at least 40 percent of Project Ujima's students graduate after five years of school and to have all the graduates find employment or go to graduate school.

Mr. Taylor was hired as coordinator of the Project on July 1, 1985 on the basis of six years experience at other schools of higher education.

He feels that he, and the entire staff of the African-American Institute and the Office of Minority Affairs have been effective in improving Project Ujima because they have worked together.

Here is something you can be proud of. Because of Project Ujima more of our brothers and sisters have the opportunity to succeed.

Venter, a minority student's resource person

By Melanie Liptrot

For the last six months, the position of Minority Liaison for the Department of Cooperative Education has been occupied by Ms. Patricia Venter. Her role is to coordinate activities for all minority students. She is there in order to ensure that they get the maximum benefits from the cooperative education experience and to "act as a minority student resource person."

To see where her services could be best utilized and also to gain knowledge of concerns, if there were any, Ms. Venter went around to various co-op advisors, administrators and others on campus who had dealings with minority students. She has held various workshops to share with students the information she obtained.

"When I first came, I sent a letter to all minority students and asked them to come in and talk to me," she said.

During her time as the Minority Liaison, Ms. Venter has found that the problems most students have encountered did not identify with them being minority students, but applied to all students. She has found that students complain about not being paired adequately with position and about not getting the better co-op jobs. She attributes this to "students don't get to their co-op advisors in a timely fashion."

In closing, Ms. Venter said that she'd "like for them (minority students) to be more open and objective...students don't know the resources that are available. When there is something that a student can take advantage of they should try and do it."

Ms. Venter can be contacted at 202 Stearns or at 437-3441.

"BLACK" OR "WHITE" MONDAY

By Rodney X

In the name of Allah (God), the Beneficent, the Merciful, we forever thank Him for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and His national representative, Minister Louis Farrakhan.

As-Salaam-Alaikum (Peace be unto you).

My topic tonight is "Why did you call it "Black Monday" instead of "White Monday."

Monday Oct. 19, 1987 was not a good day for the stock market on Wall Street. In fact, it has been characterized by most financial analysts as "the worst day ever." It was the day that the market plummeted 508 points, the worst plunge in the history of Wall Street.

On that day, I happened to watch the NBC Nightly News. Tom Brokaw began with the statement: "This is Black Monday." Mr. Brokaw was referring to the disastrous day which Wall Street had just experienced. As soon as I heard that day was being characterized as "Black Monday" I began to take strong exception to the use of that phrase. It was not appropriate to characterize that day of failure and calamity of this nation's financial center as a "Black" day.

I know there are some who say that no harm was meant because this market crashed in 1929, signalling the Great Depression. If I had been alive at that time, I would have taken exception then too. The problem is that white society associates failure exclusively with the color "black" at the same time

as it associates success with only the color "white."

Much of the white media throughout white America also characterized the recent failure as "Black Monday." The Honorable Elijah Muhammad and his national spokesman Minister Louis Farrakhan have taught black people the power that the media has in forming values. Let us remember the context of this discussion. We live in a racist society. To ascribe negative and positive values, respectively, to the colors black and white is to enhance the devilishment or institutionalization of this country's racist values.

Racism is both subtle and pervasive, that is why the victims of white supremacy cannot afford to become silent and complacent. For too long certain racist connotations have become socially acceptable because they have not been consistently challenged. For example, some people still panic when a black cat crosses their path. Angel food cake is white, you dress in black for funerals and you dress in white for marriages.

In the movies, the good guys wear white hats and ride white horses, the bad guys are identified by the color black. The color white

is associated with purity; the color black with impurity. It is okay to tell a little "white lie" and no one wants a so-called "black mark" on their record. It is within this context that Minister Louis Farrakhan warns black America that we must be every mindful of the psychological damage that is done to the entire society, by the use of connotations that have racist implications.

Let's look at what really happened on Wall Street. The major financial decision makers at the time of both historic crashes were almost exclusively white males. Now this is not to suggest that white males are prone to failure. But it would have been more accurate to have labeled this day "White Monday."

The truth is that there will be more bad days for Wall Street. Any financial system that is independent upon the monopolistic advantage of the rich over the poor will inevitably fail. What white America should learn

from this is that in times of great national distress or fear, more care should be taken to prevent the use of negative terminology, particularly when that terminology injures the poor black men and women of America who have had nothing whatsoever to do with the causation of the calamity.

If we are ever to expunge the evils of racism from our midst, we must understand the many, insidious ways that racism is manifested throughout our society and the world.

If you have any questions on this article, please call me at 267-7569. Thank you for reading this article and may God bless you with the light of understanding.

As-Salaam-Alaikum



Young and bold

(Continued from page 1)

bers because you're not there just to be a manager. A good president should also encourage his/her members to be more outgoing and to get involved with other activities besides those within that particular organization.

ONYX - What are your future plans?

SY - Right now I'm trying to finish up this presidency in March. I've been saying this for a whole year, but I really don't want to run again because I think as this organization becomes more and more a part of you, you start to incorporate too much and the organization starts to take on a lot of your values. I think there's always a time for change. In return,

regardless of what you go through, you will always get your rewards because there is nothing that you can do in the extracurricular fashion that can beat getting involved in an organization to enhance your own skills and to learn how to negotiate and deal with other people, because you can't sit in a classroom for four years and get anything out of it. So my plans are to get whatever I can out of NBSA and try to get NBSA going in a new direction with the new president. In 1989, I'll graduate and go to law school somewhere in D.C. or North Carolina, whichever will take me; and maybe get married, I don't know.

Minority Students on Dean's List

The ONYX Staff would like to congratulate the minority freshmen who made the Dean's List for the Fall 1987 academic quarter. They are listed below. May they continue to do well in their future academic endeavors.

Tracy Aguilar
Howard Allen
Michelle J. Andutza
Frederick Anochie
Michael T. Brown
Ursula R. Bugg
Steven B. Carney
Shawn Carter
Che N. Coker
Robert Connell II
Raymond S. Dean
Mslunson Delly
Bryan K. Demps
Alma D. Ezell
Yokasta Fellz
Jonathan F. Gamarra
Mary Gant
Andrea E. Greenidge

Dexter B. Jenkins
Calvin L. Johnson
Andrea L. Jones
Paul M. Jones
Arletha P. Leaston
Eric Lufkin
Ruthie D. Lyle
Michael J. Maldonado
Stephanie T. Marson
William B. Martin
Mauricio Mazuera
Rodrigo Mazuera
Kimberly McCullough
Michelle R. Meggs
Christopher Morris
Anne Oneal
Martha E. Owens
David A. Peck
Sonia L. Pettit
Haven M. Robinson
Jesus Rodriguez
Lisa Sam
Ciana M. Santin
Jennifer R. Sarabla
Saundra D. Shelton

Linda M. Skelton
Hannah R. Staelln
Raynelle Swilling
Rala M. Thompson
Chanel M. Ward
Scott M. Weldon

Join the Onyx

Get involved!!

Contact Wayne:

437-3591